

Today's News - Monday, July 27, 2009

- ArcSpace brings us an eyeful of de Portzamparc's museum home for Tintin.
- Saffron on an urban design face-off: "Philadelphia hasn't seen a design competition this interesting in quite awhile" (upshot: winner isn't the one the residents wanted); and a program this Wednesday to focus on how to make Philly word better.
- Cannell on some plans to "strengthen cities by shrinking them": perhaps "bulldoze the parking lot and put in a pasture"?
- Glancey x 2: it's time to make every town an eco-town instead of "building tokenistic, half-baked fake communities while we're still wedded to motorways, airports and superstores"; and the Stirling Prize shortlist leaves him a bit cold (though not totally unimpressed).
- Ouroussoff bemoans security fears causing a sudden turn-around on the (government-approved) design for a new border-crossing station.
- The Birmingham Central Library's final chapter: it's a test case for post-war buildings that "are coming down like skittles."
- Twentieth Century Society chairman speaks out on why Robin Hood Gardens deserves to be listed.
- Should we be worried about a repeat of the "Lost Generation" of the early '90s? Perhaps not - "simply because there is really no place to get lost."
- Baillieu calls for less red tape to help struggling architects (even some starchitects): it would be a shame if working in the U.K. is made so difficult they seek greener pastures elsewhere.
- The massive Heart of Doha project looks to "revive the Qatari architectural language of the past combined with today's technologies, in their modern context."
- MVRDV's super-sized project for Tianjin, China (not all are pleased).
- King on a potentially perfect site (and a few others) for Fisher's museum that could keep it in San Francisco.
- L.A.'s only public gardens to recycle a parking garage into a very green gallery.
- Two we couldn't resist: some notable names share their memories of the Four Seasons on the 50th anniversary of "one of New York's great modern spaces."
- Aerial maps of New York State turned into a most intriguing alphabet!

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[Christian de Portzamparc: Musee Hergé, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium](#)

Francisville face-off on urban design: ...where the future of urban design in Philadelphia could be decided...For a change, the choice is between two excellent developers, each offering a progressive, urban-minded vision...Yet their definitions of what's progressive and what's urban are poles apart...Philadelphia hasn't seen a design competition this interesting in quite awhile. By Inga Saffron -- Onion Flats; Sam Sherman; Hankin Group [\[images\]](#) - Philadelphia Inquirer

Figuring out how to make Philly work better: "Reshaping the City: New Visions for Urban Infrastructure" July 29...how the Greater Philadelphia region should think about its long-term infrastructure investment strategy -- that will strongly influence the middle of this century and beyond. -- Marilyn Jordan Taylor; Alex Krieger/Chan Krieger Sieniewicz; Trent Lethco/ARUP; PennPraxis - PlanPhilly

Should We Bulldoze Underused Neighborhoods and Return Them to Nature? Bulldoze the parking lot and put in a pasture: A plan to strengthen cities by shrinking them is debated in Flint, Michigan. By Michael Cannell [\[images, links\]](#) - Fast Company

Make every town an eco-town: There's no point building tokenistic, half-baked fake communities...while we're still wedded to motorways, airports and superstores...Why not just say no to unsustainable development...and, in doing so, encourage a more genuinely sustainable landscape and society? We wouldn't need the eco-town initiative if we did so... By Jonathan Glancey - BD/Building Design (UK)

Stirling prize leaves me feeling cold: Low-key, meditative buildings dominate on a shortlist responding to the economic hangover, but how can a rural arts museum be judged against a city office block? Low-key doesn't mean lesser architecture, though. By Jonathan Glancey -- Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM); Rogers Stirk Harbour; Tony Fretton; Eric Parry Architects; BDP [\[slide show\]](#) - Guardian (UK)

At a Border Crossing, Security Trumps Openness: ...taking a toll on the design for a border-crossing station in in Massena, N.Y....It is as if the government is attuned to architecture's symbolic power, but unable to decipher its meanings. By Nicolai Ouroussoff -- Smith-Miller & Hawkinson [\[images\]](#) - New York Times

Birmingham Central Library's final chapter: English Heritage would like to see it listed, but the city's political elite...want it demolished...post-war buildings are coming down like skittles. The Central Library is a test case. By Andy Foster -- John Madin (1974); Mecanoo [\[images\]](#) - BD/Building Design (UK)

Why Robin Hood Gardens deserves to be listed: It may be a little dirty, but the simple, appealing architecture...truly does give to the poor...could become a demonstration of less wasteful funding -- if, instead of falling victim to a profit-led development with some affordable housing alongside, it could be refurbished without the high environmental costs associated with demolition. By Alan Powers/Twentieth Century Society -- Alison and Peter Smithson (1972) [\[slide show\]](#) - Guardian (UK)

Have You Seen Me? Missing from design firms: young talent. Should architects be worrying about a repeat of the "Lost Generation" of the early '90s? ...A new lost generation many not be in the cards, simply because there is really no place to get lost. - Architect Magazine

Don't make hard times harder: Architects like David Adjaye have enough to worry about without tying clients' hands with red tape...It may be that, like his former

[employer David Chipperfield, he will come to the view that working in the UK is too difficult...That would be a shame... By Amanda Baillieu- BD/Building Design \(UK\)](#)

[Home is where Heart of Doha is: Dohaland's signature project...to regenerate the historically important centre of Doha, revive the Qatari architectural language of the past...combined with today's technologies, in their modern context. -- Allies and Morrison; Arup; EDAW; Burns McDonnell; Gillespies Landscape Architects; Mossesian and Partners; Dar Al Omran; Adjaye Associates; John McAslam; Aedas- Gulf Times \(Qatar\)](#)

[MVRDV Designs Super-Sized Project For Tianjin: TEDA, the 240,000-square-meter development \(approximately 2.5 million square feet\) will comprise 10 towers, with nearly 6,000 residences... -- Tianjin Architects & Consulting Engineers \[image\]- Architectural Record](#)

[A downtown site for the Fisher art collection: Sue Bierman Park is a forlorn patch of green near the Ferry Building...may also be the best place in San Francisco to house the fabled art owned by Gap founder...If the political odds are long, the potential is as captivating... By John King- San Francisco Chronicle](#)

[Unveiled: Sturt Haaga Gallery: Garage at Decanso Gardens to be revamped as green galleries...to showcase both locally and nationally produced art in one of Los Angeles' only public gardens...design incorporates both vertical gardens and roof gardens to create visual connections between the new structure and its verdant setting... -- Frederick Fisher and Partners \[images\]- The Architect's Newspaper](#)

[Fifty Years of the Four Seasons: On the anniversary of one of New York's great modern spaces...what makes that restaurant the ultimate dining experience...a number of people...share their memories of this singular space. By Belinda Lanks & Paul Makovsky -- Mies van der Rohe; Philip Johnson; Kitty Hawks; Norman Diekman; Robert A.M. Stern; Gerald D. Hines; Phyllis Lambert; Ada Louise Huxtable; Hilary Lewis; Terence Riley; Belmont Freeman \[images\]- Metropolis Magazine](#)

[The ABCs of New York: Using Google aerial maps, a British researcher has selected Empire State images that make up all 26 letters of the alphabet. Alphabet State was created by Rachel Young... \[slide show\]- New York Post](#)

[Book Review: "Everything Must Move: 15 Years at Rice School of Architecture 1994-2009": There's a Texas flood of architectural ideas that gives ample evidence of an architecture school that unsettles pat assumptions. Who could ask for anything more? By Norman Weinstein- ArchNewsNow](#)

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